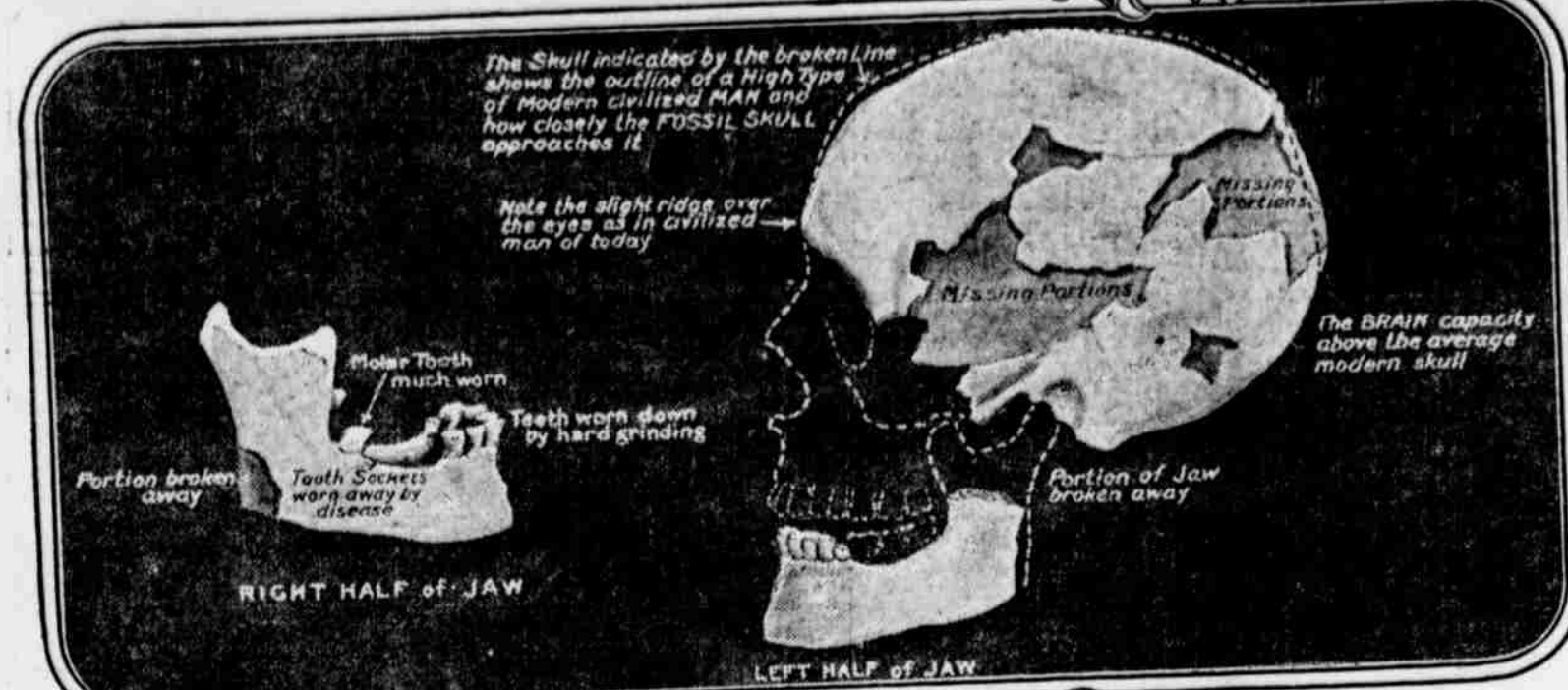


SKULLS AS MILESTONES OF THE AGES



THE ENGLISHMAN OF 15,000 OR 50 YEARS AGO



At first sight the finding of a human skeleton—strangely like the human skeleton of the present day—some six or seven feet below the surface does not appear an epoch-making event, but when the conditions under which it was found are carefully considered, it is just this striking similarity to the living type that renders the Halling man so interesting and valuable. An array of details has been unearthed which assures the investigators that they have here the remains of an individual who long preceded the builders of Stonehenge, a man who dates back at least to what is vaguely known as the early neolithic period, but who more probably lived his strenuous life under the severe conditions obtaining towards the end of the paleolithic age, warring with the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros and other aggressive creatures of the pleistocene.

The famous skull discovered by Mr. Charles Dawson in the Weald of Sussex last year belongs to the first chapter of the history of the future; the discovery made recently at Halling yields materials for a much later chapter—the one giving an account of Englishmen towards the close of the pleistocene period. Between the Sussex man and the Halling man lies an immensely long stretch of time—the time necessary for carrying out the greater part of that wide and deep hollow between the North and South Downs. In that time man shed the last of his anthropoid features and assumed his modern form—for the Halling man is one of ourselves, and the Sussex individual most certainly is not. The importance of the present discovery is that, until now, we knew very little of our British predecessors at the close of the pleistocene period.

The Medway has played a part in carving out the Weald of Sussex; it has cut the "bottle-neck" gorge in the North Downs at Rochester to reach the valley of the Thames. On its western bank, some four miles above Rochester, stands the little village of Halling—where the recent discovery was made. Between the village and the river lies a stretch of marshland nearly half a mile in width, but as the village is approached the land rises sharply to form a terrace 15 feet above the level of the river. The terrace extends along both sides of the valley; it is composed of stratified brick earths. In this terrace, between the marshland by the river and the village of Halling, the skeleton was exposed.

The discovery was due to a fortunate mischance. During an excavation of some depth a slip of the friable earth occurred, revealing the greater part of a skeleton lying in situ as shown in the diagram. This landslide also disclosed a set of great importance, namely, that the strata were unbroken and level as when deposited in the course of many thousands of years. It can thus be no question as to the antiquity

of the remains, the undisturbed condition of the ground precluding the idea of burial at a date later than that in which they were deposited.

The remains lay in a stratum of what is geologically known as brick earth, though it will be readily inferred that bricks have nothing to do with it. It is but the rain wash of centuries, the fine particles being inter-ference, which suggest pieces of brick. Overlying this stratum was a layer of sand with a layer of more recent brick earth above it, then red loam, and finally the vegetable top soil—altogether four strata, averaging about six feet in total thickness.

The top of the stratum in which the remains were found appears to have been the land surface of the age in which the man lived. This is shown by the fortunate discovery, some 30 yards away, of the charred and blackened remains of prehistoric fire hearths, fragments of burnt bones and wood, worked flints and many animal bones. The worked flints have been submitted to expert examination at the British Museum, where the balance of opinion appears to be in favor of assigning them to the paleolithic period, or, at any rate, to the time of transition between that and the neolithic age, which would place their age at some 15,000 years. Geological evidence, however, dates them still further back, for the corresponding deposits on the opposite side of the Medway have yielded fossils of pleistocene times, when the hairy mammoth, arctic fox, reindeer and woolly rhinoceros roamed the land. The inference, therefore, is that we have here a paleolithic encampment, and that the skeleton was one of the party, who, judging from the position of the remains, was interred a short distance below the then surface, while some religious significance is suggested by the body being buried with the head to the east.

How did the human remains come to lie in this stratum of brick earth? Dr. Edwards observed, from the position of the bones which remained fast in place, that the skeleton lay on its back, that all parts of the skeleton were represented, and that the whole did not occupy more than an extent of three feet in length—evidence that the body was in the "contracted" posture at death. A complete skeleton, much weathered and fragmentary, and in a contracted posture, could only be explained by supposing that it had been buried. The solution of the problem became apparent later. At some distance from the site of the skeleton there were found extensive remains of ancient fire hearths. These lay immediately over the stratum containing the skeleton, and under the overlying or fourth stratum. This level represented an old land surface, and the skeleton was probably one of the men who sat round the hearths on that old land surface. That is the explanation. Mr. Cook suggested at a recent meeting of the Royal Anthropological Institute, when he gave an account of his discoveries. Mr. A. S. Kennard, who is our highest authority on the age of valley deposits, regards the strata over the Halling man as late pleistocene in date. Mr. Cook described the flint implements found on the old land surface, but they belong to a type which was used by paleolithic as well as neolithic men.

The remains of the skeleton were forwarded to Professor Keith of the Royal College of Surgeons, for expert examination, and, as he explained to the writer, a close scrutiny revealed the surprising fact that we have here a type of man who, in every particular—brain capacity, conformation of skull, long oval face, pointed projecting chin, stature (five feet four inches) and general build—

is practically identical with people one meets in the street every day, and this notwithstanding the great interval of time that must have elapsed and the vastly different conditions of life now prevailing. Indeed, he found that the brain capacity (some 1,500 cubic centimeters) even exceeds the present-day average. In this respect the skull is analogous to that of the Tilbury fossil man, to which Professor Keith is inclined to assign an age of 30,000 years, judging from the position in which it was found, beneath 31 feet of strata. He is also of opinion that the Tilbury man and his Halling neighbor are members of the same race, averaging over five feet in height, strongly built, with well-formed skulls and a striking absence of heavy ridges over the eyes, a race which Huxley described as the "river-bed" type, from its apparent haunts. This type is known to have lived in paleolithic times, since a skull was lately discovered in company with pleistocene fossils buried in a Derbyshire cave. The latter portion of the paleolithic period is estimated to extend back from some 25,000 for at least 15,000 years.

This race of men was immeasurably superior in cranial development to the race represented by the Piltdown skull, supposing this to be human, and unquestionably hundreds of thousands of years intervened between the two. In comparing the great brain capacity of the Halling man with that of the neolithic skull discovered near Walton-on-the-Naze, which is estimated to be at most not more than 4,000 years old, we do not find the development expected, since the latter possessed a brain capacity of but 1,250 cubic centimeters, whereas the skull of the Galley Hill man, regarded as the oldest British example (excepting the Piltdown) yet discovered, has a brain capacity of between 1,350 and 1,400 cubic centimeters. Professor Keith, in his work on "The Ancient Types of Man," notes that in an average modern man of the Galley Hill skeleton's stature "one should expect a brain of 1,450 to 1,475 cubic centimeters (and) there are many men in England today with smaller brains than the Galley Hill man." These remarks will apply with still more force to the Halling man. Regarding such primitive types as the Neanderthal, Gibraltar and Piltdown skulls, their antiquity must be measured by many hundreds of thousands of years, if we are to understand that a process of evolution has developed such high paleolithic types directly from these progenitors.

REAL TROUBLE.

First Excited Railroad Official—Heard the news?
Second Same Thing—Oh, not so bad. Only five killed—two of 'em braken.
First—But, my heavens, didn't you know that along with that vaudeville baggage we were carrying Jungle, the \$200,000 trained baboon? The wreck drove him crazy, and the owner's getting ready to sue the road for his full value.—Puck.

JUST TO TRY THEM OUT.

"You require a serious surgical operation."
"I am not surprised."
"Ah, you knew then by the way you felt that there was something serious the matter with you?"
"No; I expected I would require an operation when I learned that you had purchased a new set of surgical instruments."

LET THE PUNISHMENT FIT THE CRIME.

"I see a Texas man has been fined a thousand dollars and sentenced to two years in the penitentiary for whipping an orphan."
"And served him right. Now I hope the law will get after these people who feed their children parsnips and grapefruit."

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JULY 20

MOSES CALLED TO DELIVER ISRAEL.

LESSON TEXT—Ex. 3:1-16. Read the entire chapter.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Matt. 5:8.

Last week we learned that Moses had a vision of a great need; in today's lesson there is revealed to Moses the other half of the lesson, viz., One who could meet that need; One who could supply all that was lacking when Moses made his first ill-advised attempt to free his kinsmen.

Bush and Voice.

I. The Manner of Moses' Call. His call came in the midst of his labor as a shepherd. God does not set a premium upon idleness and his greatest revelation came through two very common agencies, a bush and a voice. There were probably many other such bushes on the back side of the desert, but this one is distinguished by the presence of Jehovah. Moses turned aside to see this "great sight." Why was it not consumed? Because it was divinely lighted. Having secured his attention Jehovah spoke to Moses, called to him out of the midst of the bush. When men pause in the faithful discharge of the common tasks of life and consider God it will not be long before they will hear his still, small voice. God's call is never to the idler and is generally through the common agencies and experiences of life. The time is ripe for deliverance. God had tested Moses for forty years. Now God is ready to reveal himself here upon Horeb, the mountain of God. Jehovah's presence is symbolized by the fire (see chapter 13:21, 22 and 19:18). The lowly bush suggests the incarnation. In Jesus humanity was on fire with the presence of God, yet was not consumed.

II. The Purpose of Moses' Call. This was two-fold: (a) Deliverance from sorrow, oppression and the task masters of Egypt (type of sin) vv. 9, 10, 17. (b) Deliverance to freedom, a better land, to service, worship and riches, vv. 8, 12, 21, 22. Moses made ready response to the voice of God, saying, "Here am I" (v. 4). He had not grown cold and cynical during his shepherd days, but rather was more keen and teachable. He had, however, another lesson to learn, viz., the majesty and holiness of God. So it was he is halted and commanded to remove his shoes (v. 5). The Christian can draw nigh with boldness (Heb. 10:19) but he must remember to do so with "reverence and awe" (Heb. 12:28, 29).

God's Answer.

III. The Credentials That Accompanied Moses' Call. As has been suggested, this call came by means of two very common agencies, viz., a bush and a voice. While Moses no longer depends upon his own strength yet he lacks that assurance and those credentials that will justify, in his own sight, a return to the court of Pharaoh. "Who am I that I should go?" God's answer is, "Certainly I will be with thee." Moses need have no fear, nor need the Christian (Matt. 28:30). "If God be for us who can be against us?" Our commission which is from God is certain of ultimate success. There could be no possibility of failure for Moses is told that when deliverance is accomplished "ye shall serve God upon this mountain." Yet Moses is not satisfied for he remembers his previous experience with his kinsmen (2:13, 14), what shall he say to them? In answer God gives Moses a name by which he shall be known "I am that I am," and further he is to tell them that he is the "Jehovah, the God of their fathers." God does not set before Moses a primrose path to follow. He plainly states that Pharaoh will object and that their deliverance will be wrought by a mighty hand.

IV. Moses' Response to the Call. We have seen that this call came "in" the midst of the common duties of daily toil; that it was "for" a definite, a specific purpose, deliverance from and deliverance to; this call came "by" God. A God, past, present, future. God a person, "I am." God, a power, "I will." but the call was "to" an agent. God works his purposes through man. "I will send thee." This agent had assurance, proper credentials, and was promised power, sufficient aid. Moses as this agent was a man of (1) humility (v. 11); (2) lacking in knowledge (v. 13); (3) lacking in confidence (Ch. 4:1); (4) lacking eloquence (4:10).

V. The Teaching. We thus have presented a wonderful revelation of God. The unconsumed bush appealed to Moses. Filled to fullness with the flaming fire of God's glory it was still unconsumed, a suggestion of what the presence of God means either in a man or among a people. The visible is followed by the audible and there is brought to our attention the absolute purity of God, the infinite power of God, the marvelous patience of God, the overwhelming pity of God and the irresistible patience of God. Such infinite resources are at our disposal.

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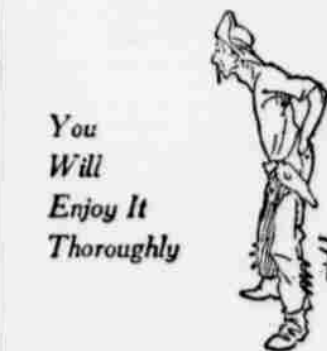
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